

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

September 16, 2021

His Excellency Boris Johnson, MP
Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London, United Kingdom
SW1A 2AA

Dear Prime Minister Johnson,

As Members of Congress who have continued to be involved in the effort to bring peace and reconciliation to the island of Ireland throughout our time in the House of Representatives, we believe it would be a serious mistake for the British government to renege on its commitment to the Stormont House Agreement. We represent districts with large Irish American populations, and many of our constituents have expressed grave concern over these new legacy proposals that would lead to major setbacks in the search for justice and reconciliation.

When the British and Irish governments, along with Northern Irish political parties, published the Stormont House Agreement on December 23, 2014, they pledged to create four new legacy bodies. The goal of these bodies was to deliver justice to the bereaved of the conflict by providing human rights compliant investigations under the rule of law. Of critical importance to the agreement was the formation of the Historical Investigations Unit, which was a legacy body established to investigate lingering and controversial killings that took place during the Troubles, including those committed by British state forces.

In January 2020, over five years after conditions were originally laid out, the U.K. government finally pledged to introduce Parliamentary legislation to set up the legacy bodies. Despite this, progress into these investigations has essentially remained stagnant while nearly 1,700 conflict-related cases await investigation. Had the Historical Investigations Unit been provided with the resources and attention it was promised, more substantial progress might have been achieved over the past several years.

We are disappointed to learn that instead of taking constructive steps to fulfill these promises, British Parliament plans to introduce new legislation that would modify Stormont House Agreement legacy laws and institute a ban on legacy inquests and prosecution of former soldiers who served in Northern Ireland during the conflict. To be clear, we strongly disapprove of these proposals. We believe that they would not only prevent a pathway to justice, but that they would also strip these families of their legal rights protected under European Law and the Good Friday Agreement.

The issue of legacy killings spans across generations, and any continued deprivation of justice will only further deepen the wound that this history has on Britain and Ireland. We are concerned that these proposed legacy laws would strain the British-Irish relationship and cement widespread feelings that justice is again being denied. There is no doubt that the difficult and troubling

legacy of the past must be addressed, and we as Members of Congress will continue to advocate on this issue until good faith action is taken and progress is made.

These legacy proposals require genuine reconsideration. Delivering answers for these bereaved families has been a longstanding priority for the Irish American community and those interested in global peace. We will continue to listen to these families as they await long overdue answers.

We urge you to reexamine these proposals, reverse the decision, and reaffirm your commitment to the Stormont House Agreement.

Sincerely,



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



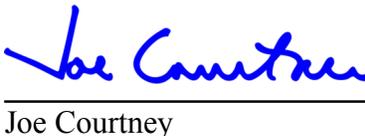
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Member of Congress



William R. Keating
Member of Congress



Thomas R. Suozzi
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Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



Brian Higgins
Member of Congress



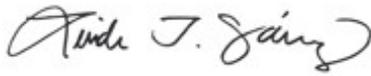
Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress



Matt Cartwright
Member of Congress



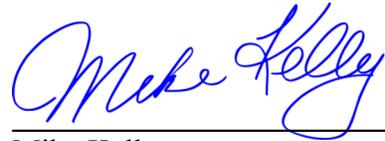
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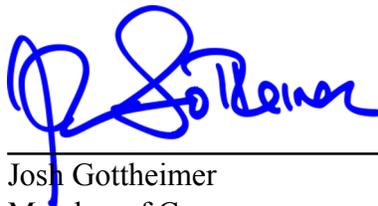
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